

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter. Sinclair is betraying the public trust by broadcasting a documentary that will bias voters towards a candidate who will reward him with a greater monopoly. This kind of programming is not news, but propaganda.

Station ownership by large companies like Sinclair reduces the value of local stations. Local broadcasting can be a tool for community development and unity, but with large companies like Sinclair usurping local broadcasts viewers lose not only their choice in programming, but also their local news and information.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.